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The UMass Boston Friday Report

Volume 2, Number 19
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News and information about and for the
University Community from the Chancellor's Office

Writings and Lectures by Political Science Professor Examine Contentious Debate on Heredity and Human Behavior

Political science professor Diane Paul wrote an article published in *Newsweek* magazine last month on the longstanding controversy over the contribution of heredity and environment to differences in human behavior. Paul's article traces the "nature-nurture" debate to 1865, when researcher Sir Francis Galton argued that high achievement results from good genes, and vice-versa. Numerous researchers since have taken turns contradicting each other, and, according to Paul, the debate is likely to continue. "I don't think there's much to be gained from attempts to estimate the heritability of human behavioral traits," she says. "This kind of research won't tell us how much people can achieve, and therefore it's irrelevant in developing effective social policy."

Paul, who holds a Ph.D. from Brandeis University, is co-director with Arthur Millman of the University's program in science, technology and values. She teaches courses in science and public policy, the history of Darwinism, and political theory. She also writes and lectures extensively on the social and political aspects of genetic research. Last month she was one of 25 scientists from around the world invited to a meeting of the Commission of the European Communities in Munich for a discussion of ethical issues linked to biomedical research. In February she spoke on behavior genetics at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). She also has contributed chapters to several books, and her articles have appeared in many journals, including *The Sciences*, *Scientific American*, *Genetics*, and *Journal of the History of Ideas*.

Paul arrived at UMass Boston in 1971 with an interest in tax policy. Her curiosity about genetic issues wasn't kindled until several years later, when she spent a summer studying biology at the UMass field station on Nantucket Island. The next fall she returned to the Harbor Campus to resume teaching. She also enrolled in another biology course, and took several more over the next few years. "It was like eating potato chips," she says. "I couldn't stop." Last year Paul was one of only three non-scientists invited to the Keystone Scientist-to-Scientist colloquium in Colorado. In 1988 she received a fellowship from the Institute for Advanced Study in Berlin to write about genetic research conducted by the Nazis. She received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1987 to study population and developmental genetics at Harvard University, and three years earlier was awarded an Exxon Educational Foundation fellowship to spend a year at MIT, where she wrote about the history of eugenics. Paul is currently on sabbatical leave and hopes to develop a new course in science and religion when she returns to the Harbor Campus for the spring 1994 semester.

Trustees Approve Tuition, Curriculum Fee Hikes

At its meeting on April 7 the University Board of Trustees approved an increase of 4% in tuition and curriculum fee charges for the 1993-94 academic year. The total of the increases works out to \$76 per semester for undergraduates and \$87 for graduate students. The semester tuition/curriculum fee charges for a full-time undergraduate student taking 12 credits therefore will amount to \$1,974.68.

Chancellor **Sherry H. Penney** pointed out that the increase is just slightly above the current Metropolitan Boston Consumer Price Index of 3.8%. She said it was needed to meet the anticipated rise in expenditures due to inflation of goods and services and to cover some newly imposed state mandated costs. The estimated revenue from the increase in the tuition charge and the curriculum support fee, she added, will help take care of approximately 90% of the campus' mandatory costs for the coming year.

"We realize that these increases impose an additional burden on our students," the Chancellor said. "We therefore plan to expand our commitment to meet their financial aid needs for the next year." During the current year the University is providing more than \$2 million from its own resources as well as close to \$16 million in federal and other financial aid dollars to help students meet the costs of their education. At their meeting the trustees also approved increases in several mandatory student fee categories. For full-time students, the athletics fee was increased from \$45 to \$50 a semester, and the health fee per semester rose from \$47 to \$57. The one-time recreation fee was increased from \$70 to \$90. According to Penney, the increase in these fees was driven by higher wage and benefit costs, and by the University's desire to maintain the quality of student life. Discussions are still in progress about the SAC fee for FY 94.

Campus Notes -- The McCormack Institute will mark its tenth anniversary with an April 23 celebration in the Ryan Lounge. At 11:00 a.m. a ceremony will take place establishing the Institute's **John Joseph Moakley** Award for distinguished public service. Congressman Moakley will deliver the main address at a noontime reception. Other speakers will include U.S. Representative and majority whip **David E. Bonior**, State Senate President **William M. Bulger** and **Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.**, the former speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives. • The University will celebrate international Earth Day on April 17 with a host of activities. People are encouraged to bring recyclable products to the Harbor Campus for pickup between 9:00 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. In addition, boats will transport to and from the campus those who wish to take part in a cleanup of Thompson Island. • University trustee **Robert Haynes** and **Susan Haussler**, associate dean of the College of Nursing, attended an April 5 meeting on health care reform sponsored by U. S. Senator **Edward M. Kennedy**. • A memorial concert and reception will be held at 8:00 p.m. on April 24 in Snowden Auditorium for **John Huggler**, a founding member of the music department, who died in January. Huggler, a recipient of the Boston Symphony Orchestra's distinguished Horblit Award, taught composition and jazz at UMass Boston for 25 years. • The College of Nursing will present several awards at its third annual recognition dinner at 6:30 p.m. on April 15 at the Copley Plaza Hotel. The recipients are **Joyce C. Clifford**, vice president for nursing at Beth Israel Hospital; **Theresa M. Corcoran**, professor emeritus in the nursing college's human performance and fitness program; **Linda Dumas**, an associate professor at the college; **Jeanne Gibbs**, a 1987 UMass Boston nursing graduate; and **Thomas C. Rielly**, a 1981 Boston State College graduate. • Faculty of the human performance and fitness program met March 31 with physical education instructors from schools in 18 Greater Boston communities to discuss how students can pursue careers in physical education. • The Joiner Center is sponsoring an April 15 lecture by University of Wisconsin professor **Alfred McCoy** called "The Politics of Heroin: The CIA and the Global Drug Trade Since 1975." It will take place at 4:00 p.m. in the University Club. • The federal Nellie Mae Fund for Education awarded \$15,000 to the University's Project REACH program. In addition, Nellie Mae has pledged \$10,000 more in matching funds if the project can raise that amount by June 30.